



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 11 March 2008

Current Nationwide



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- The New York Times reports a China Southern passenger jet that departed Friday morning from the heavily Muslim region of Xinjiang was forced to make an emergency landing after the flight crew apprehended at least two passengers who authorities say intended to sabotage the airplane. The plane, heading for Beijing, was diverted to the city of Lanzhou after an onboard incident. (See item [14](#))
- According to an Associated Press investigation, a vast array of pharmaceuticals – including antibiotics, anti-convulsants, mood stabilizers, and sex hormones – have been found in the drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans in 24 major metropolitan areas. Researchers do not yet understand the exact risks from decades of persistent exposure to random combinations of low levels of pharmaceuticals. (See item [20](#))

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 9, Financial Times* – (International) **Canada warns U.S. over oil sands.** Canada has warned the U.S. government that a narrow interpretation of the Energy Independence and Security Act 2007 would prohibit its neighbor buying fuel from Alberta's vast oil sands, with "unintended consequences for both countries." Section 526 of the law limits U.S. government procurement of alternative fuels to those from which

the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions are equal to or less than those from conventional fuel from conventional petroleum sources. Canada's oil sands are considered unconventional fuels, and producing them emits more greenhouse gas than conventional production. The Bush administration has, nonetheless, encouraged developing oil sands. A Canadian diplomat said, "Classifying fuel from the oil sands as non-conventional fuel...would unnecessarily complicate the integrated Canada-U.S. energy relationship." An energy expert said cutting out the oil sands as a source of fuel would limit global supplies further, forcing up the price of oil: "\$106 a barrel is going to look cheap."
Source: <http://www.windaction.org/news/14588>

2. *March 9, Washington Post* – (Virginia) **Power line along W&OD Trail will be underground.** A segment of a planned power line in Loudoun County, Virginia, would be built underground as a result of a bill that has passed both houses of the General Assembly and awaits the governor's signature. The underground portion of the 12-mile, 230,000-volt Dominion Virginia Power line would be about 1.8 miles along the Washington & Old Dominion Trail. The bill also calls for three other underground pilot projects involving transmission lines at sites to be determined later.
Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/08/AR2008030801030.html?nav=hcmodule>
3. *March 9, Post Independent* – (Colorado) **Residents have more to say about drilling near Project Rulison.** Area residents opposed to drilling near the Project Rulison nuclear blast site – where the government detonated a 43-kiloton nuclear weapon 8,426 feet below the surface in 1969 in an experiment to free up natural gas – addressed Garfield County, Colorado, commissioners on Monday. EnCana Oil & Gas (USA) and Noble Energy have received conditional approval for 19 permits for wells within a three-mile area after a December 21 decision by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to allow drilling within the area. According to a letter submitted by the residents to the commissioners, the Department of Energy is willing to conduct further research and testing at the blast site, and that the state will request additional research if Garfield County will agree. The residents also requested that the commissioners endorse an open scientific advisory committee. That committee would be composed of recognized scientists "to work with the DOE in ensuring the quality and openness of any DOE research and recommendations regarding the need for a 'no drilling' closure enveloped to protect the public health and safety from contamination of ground, water, soil, or produced natural gas."
Source:
<http://www.postindependent.com/article/20080309/VALLEYNEWS/850218644>
4. *March 8, Deseret Morning News* – (Utah) **U.S. suit accuses Questar of clean-air violations.** The U.S. Attorney's Office is suing a division of Questar Corp. for alleged violations of the federal Clean Air Act at five of its natural gas compressor stations in northeastern Utah. In a complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City on February 29, federal prosecutors claim that Questar Gas Management Co. has failed to control toxic air emissions at its Coyote Wash, Chapita, Island, Wonsits Valley, and River Bend compressor stations in the Uinta Basin. All five plants lie within the historic

boundaries of the Uintah-Ouray Indian Reservation, which gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulatory control over the compressor stations. “What we’re seeing out (in the Uinta Basin) is unprecedented oil and gas development by not just Questar but many companies, and we’re concerned about the cumulative impact on the air quality in the region,” said an EPA attorney. Prosecutors also allege that the company made repeated equipment upgrades to the facilities without going through the proper notification and inspection process. Questar faces possible fines of \$27,000 per day for each alleged violation that occurred before March 15, 2004, and \$32,500 per day for each alleged violation after that date. The company has until May 5 to file a response to the lawsuit. The EPA attorney expects the EPA will continue negotiating a settlement with Questar.

Source: <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,5143,695259957,00.html>

5. *March 7, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* – (Pennsylvania) **Gas companies work to update aging system.** Natural gas lines that crisscross western Pennsylvania largely are steel pipes built to last five or six decades, and they should be replaced soon with more durable plastic lines, utility experts say. As an investigation continues into last week’s apparent gas explosion that leveled a house in Plum and killed a man, the region’s natural gas delivery companies and others talked about efforts to update thousands of miles of lines that might be corroding and, in some cases, were put down by long-gone companies. The state Public Utility Commission (PUC) does not tell gas companies when to replace old lines, other than to require them to maintain safety, and it does not track leaks or pipeline replacement work. Statewide, the PUC recorded 14 incidents last year in which a natural gas or liquefied natural gas release resulted in deaths, severe injuries, or other problems such as major property damage. A spokesman for Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania said, “In recent years there has been an increase in maintenance” on the aging lines. Most date to the World War II era. Starting around the 1970s, utilities switched to installing coated steel or plastic lines. “Plastic is a lot stronger, and you don’t have a problem with corrosion. In western Pennsylvania, the soil is fairly acidic,” said a utility contractor.

Source: http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/regional/s_556017.html

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Chemical Industry Sector

6. *March 9, Gannett News Service* – (New Jersey) **New federal measure would allow N.J. to set chemical-plant laws.** New legislation aimed at preventing terrorist attacks on the nation’s 15,000 chemical plants, storage depots and related facilities has begun making its way through Congress with a provision bound to please New Jersey lawmakers. Expected to be introduced in the House next week, the measure would allow New Jersey and other state or local governments to pass their own chemical-security laws provided those do not clash with the federal law. The new measure would make the pre-emption ban permanent, said a toxics expert at the environmental group Greenpeace. An industry group, American Chemistry Council, supports the bill despite the pre-emption language. “Chemical plants are a very threatening element of the New Jersey Turnpike stretch that security experts consider to be the most dangerous two miles in

America,” said a New Jersey congressman in a statement. The government is worried that terrorists could strike chemical plants to unleash toxic gas clouds or steal chemicals like chlorine to use in future attacks. Last year, the Homeland Security Department warned chemical companies to guard against chlorine thefts after a string of so-called chlorine bomb attacks in Iraq. In February, the New York Police Department set up a fake water-treatment company and purchased deadly chemicals online to demonstrate how easily terrorists could obtain such materials over the Internet.

Source:

<http://www.app.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080309/NEWS03/803090413/1007>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

7. *March 9, Philadelphia Inquirer* – (National) **A jobs boom is shaking nuclear industry.** At a time when oil prices are rising, the nuclear industry is experiencing a startling, largely unheralded rejuvenation. But there is a tremendous shortage of future workers. The current average age is just north of 48, and one in three nuclear workers will be eligible to retire in 2012, according to the Nuclear Energy Institute. “We will not have enough people in two years or three years,” said the founder of Goodnight Consulting Inc., a nuclear-consulting firm specializing in staffing. The nuclear industry’s situation is unique, based primarily on the fact that after the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster in 1979, the industry seemed doomed, and hiring ground to a halt. Now, the industry is scrambling to catch up. Exelon Nuclear figures it will need to hire 2,500 people in the next five years, over-hiring by 15 percent each year. It estimates that 15 percent of its current workforce will be eligible for retirement.

Source:

http://www.philly.com/philly/business/20080309_A_jobs_boom_is_shaking_nuclear_industry.html

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

8. *March 10, Aviation Week* – (National) **GAO IDs space acquisitions woes.** In testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces March 4, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that although the Department of Defense (DOD) has made strides in addressing cost overruns and delays in space acquisitions, it continues to face persistent problems. “The majority of major acquisition programs in DOD’s space portfolio have experienced problems, resulting in cost growth close to or exceeding 100 percent on some programs,” said GAO’s director of acquisition and sourcing management. GAO cited five notable programs that have incurred “substantial cost growth and schedule delays”: the Advanced Extremely High Frequency communications satellite, the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System, the Space Based Infrared System, the Wideband Global Satcom, and the Global Positioning System IIF program. The causes of acquisition problems in space programs are myriad and include the fact that weapons programs are

"incentivized to produce and use optimistic cost and schedule estimates in order to successfully compete for funding," the report said. "We have also found that DOD starts its space programs too early...before it has assurance that the capabilities it is pursuing can be achieved within available resources and time constraints." Acquisition problems also can be linked to inadequate contracting strategy, contract and program management weaknesses, the loss of technical expertise, capability gaps in the industrial base, and divergent needs in users of space systems, among others, GAO said. GAO acknowledged that DOD is operating in a challenging environment, pressured "to deliver new, transformational capabilities" while managing "problematic, older satellite programs" that continue to cost money, constrain investment dollars, and pose a risk to capabilities.

Source:

<http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story.jsp?id=news/milspace031008.xml&headline=GAO%20IDs%20Space%20Acquisitions%20Woes&channel=space>

9. *March 8, San Diego Union-Tribune* – (National) **Probe finds falsified chemical tests on sub.** Officers and sailors aboard the San Diego-based submarine Hampton falsified weekly chemical tests for the boat's nuclear reactor during a seven-month deployment last year to the western Pacific Ocean, according to a Navy investigative report released last Friday. A preliminary investigation began in the last weeks of the Hampton's deployment, during a standard examination of the submarine's records. The probe showed that chemical tests involving high-purity water for cooling the Hampton's nuclear reactor had been falsified as far back as November 2006. Improper chemical levels can cause corrosion inside the reactor. Samples of the coolant were analyzed after the Hampton's return to San Diego, and they showed no damage to the reactor core.

Source: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/military/20080308-9999-1m8hampton.html>

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Banking and Finance Sector

10. *March 10, CNN Money* – (National) **FBI probes Countrywide for possible fraud.** The FBI is looking into fraud allegations against Countrywide Financial Corporation -- the nation's largest home lender, a U.S. government official told CNN. The investigation is still in its early stages, said another government official familiar to the situation. The probe will examine underwriting and mortgage origination practices, and whether the company misrepresented losses related to subprime loans, the Wall Street Journal said. "The FBI has been investigating potential fraud in the mortgage/sub-prime lending industry, however, we can not confirm or deny which companies are under investigation," said an FBI spokesman. A law enforcement official told CNN that there are currently 16 companies being investigated. On Friday, Countrywide's founder and CEO testified before the House Committee on Government and Oversight Reform, along with two other CEOs who resigned in the wake of the mortgage crisis. All three defended their lofty compensation packages, despite the loss of billions to their companies and shareholders.

Source:

http://money.cnn.com/2008/03/08/news/companies/countrywide_FBI/?postversion=2008031003

11. *March 10, Diamondback Online* – (National) **Scam e-mail targets student inboxes.** A scam e-mail disguised as a university-sanctioned message was sent to University of Maryland student inboxes asking for their personal account information. The e-mail, signed by the nonexistent “Umd Support Team,” tells users they must change their password to prevent unauthorized access of their student accounts. The message demanded users reply with their username and password in order to verify their account, or face the consequences. “Failure to do this will immediately render your account deactivated from our database,” the e-mail warned. The number of people who received the scam e-mail is unknown, but many users have been able to avoid receiving the message thanks to the university’s spam filter, said the director of IT security at the Office of Information Technology. At least a dozen universities have been receiving scam e-mails during the past couple of days, he added. “The phenomenon is going on at universities all over the country,” he said. Students should update their accounts through the university website, and not send their usernames and passwords through e-mail as the scam message requested, the official said. According to the Office of Information Technology website, if numbers appear in a web address, especially at the beginning of the URL, then it is usually fake. If a URL has a company name followed by a hyphen, that address may be fraudulent as well.

Source:

<http://media.www.diamondbackonline.com/media/storage/paper873/news/2008/03/10/News/Scam-EMail.Targets.Student.Inboxes-3260881.shtml>

12. *March 9, Times Record News* – (National) **Employment tax schemes may lead to jail.** Whether a business owner has a staff of one or one thousand, they are required to pay employment taxes for themselves and their employees. These taxes consist of federal income tax withholding, Social Security and Medicare taxes and unemployment taxes, as well as any withholding requirements mandated by their state. Failing to pay these taxes can result in steep fines or even prison sentences, and the Better Business Bureau (BBB) is advising business owners to ensure that they are fully complying with tax law and not unknowingly ignoring employment taxes. The BBB noted that in January 2008 alone, four U.S. business owners were fined as much as \$4.2 million and received prison sentences of up to 48 months for failing to pay employment taxes. Some paid their employees under the table or developed elaborate schemes to avoid paying employment taxes. The BBB encourages business owners to be intimately involved in tax filing and payment processes -- including knowing all of the details if a third-party is handling the process on behalf of the business. Also, the BBB is advising businesses to be aware of six common ways companies have gotten into hot water for employment tax non-compliance: hiring unreliable third-party payers; believing frivolous arguments; offshore employee leasing schemes; misclassifying worker status; paying employees in cash; and filing false payroll tax returns.

Source: <http://www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2008/mar/09/employment-tax-schemes-may-lead-jail/>

Transportation Sector

13. *March 10, USA Today* – (National) **Inspectors: FAA officials gave Southwest a pass on safety checks.** The Federal Aviation Administration officials overseeing Southwest Airlines ignored safety violations, leaked sensitive data to the carrier and tried to intimidate two inspectors to head off investigations, according to previously undisclosed allegations by the inspectors. FAA inspectors are scheduled to testify April 3 before the House Transportation Committee. They say others in the agency allowed Southwest to skip critical safety inspections for years. The FAA on Thursday fined Southwest \$10.2 million for intentionally flying 46 jets without performing inspections for cracks in the fuselage. The Transportation Committee chairman said last week the investigation had revealed the worst safety lapse he had seen in 23 years. FAA officials acknowledged that some of their own managers did not properly handle the situation at Southwest. Source: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2008-03-09-safety_N.htm
14. *March 10, New York Times* – (International) **China reports suspected terrorist activity.** A Chinese passenger jet that departed Friday morning from the heavily Muslim region of Xinjiang was forced to make an emergency landing after the flight crew apprehended at least two passengers who authorities say intended to sabotage the airplane, state media reported Sunday. The chairman of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region government told state media that “some people were attempting to create an air disaster.” The incident occurred on a China Southern flight that departed Friday morning at 10:35 from Urumqi, heading for Beijing. But the plane was diverted to the city of Lanzhou after an onboard incident. A China Southern employee in Lanzhou confirmed that the airplane had been diverted to Lanzhou. The employee said the airport was initially told that the diversion was necessary because of “traffic control” problems. State media provided only a few details, noting that “the attackers were stopped in time by the air police, and all the passengers and crew members are safe.” The official suggested that more than one person was involved but declined to provide specifics, telling Xinhua that the authorities are investigating “who the attackers are, where they are from and what’s their background. But we can be sure that this was a case intending to create an air crash,” he said. One person with information about the incident said a Uighur woman apparently smuggled three containers of gasoline onto the flight. The person said that she took the containers into the bathroom and was later apprehended by members of the flight crew. That account seemed consistent with a Friday posting on a Chinese Internet chat room. The messages discussed a landing in Lanzhou and said that it had been discovered in mid-flight that people had brought gasoline on board and that four Uighurs had been led away after the plane landed. They appeared to be a first-hand account from a passenger sending messages via a hand-held device from the Lanzhou airport, but that could not be confirmed nor could the identity of the person sending the messages. Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/world/asia/09cnd-terror.html?hp>
15. *March 10, Orlando Sentinel* – (Florida) **Airport concourse shut down.** Airport officials say a concourse at Miami International Airport was temporarily closed Sunday after a

bomb scare. An airport spokesman said that about 5:30 a.m., an item in a checked bag that went through an X-ray machine was deemed suspicious. He said Miami-Dade police's bomb unit was called to the scene and found it was a water filter. Concourse D was closed for about 40 minutes and passengers were redirected to Concourse E.

Source: http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/state/orl-cfbriefs10_508mar10,0,5284480.story

16. *March 10, Daily News* – (New York) **Terrorist threat for JFK-bound Polish aircraft sparks up scare.** A telephoned bomb threat to a Polish aircraft en route to New York set off a small scare when the plane touched down at Kennedy Airport Sunday, police said. The LOT Polish Airlines flight was surrounded by members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force after it landed about 6 p.m., officials said. "All passengers disembarked safely" and the plane was searched by bomb-sniffing dogs, said a Port Authority Police spokesperson. No explosive materials were found. Police were still investigating the threat.

Source: http://www.nydailynews.com/news/ny_crime/2008/03/10/2008-03-10_terrorist_threat_for_jfkbound_polish_air-2.html

17. *March 8, Canwest News Service* – (International) **Pilots being zapped by laser beams in flight: Transport Canada.** Transport Canada is probing 33 possible cases of airplane pilots being flashed in the eyes by ground-based laser beams -- potentially putting pilots and their flights at risk. Transport Canada is monitoring the situation and has no explanation for the incidents, which appear to be getting more frequent. Pilots have complained that someone on the ground is shining a laser at their cockpit windows trying to hit them in the eye, which can cause temporary or permanent eye damage. Pilots can be distracted, disoriented or temporarily blinded by lasers and in more serious cases suffer long-term retinal damage. Intense light can cause a retina to hemorrhage. Twelve of the incidents have occurred in Ontario, with five near Toronto's Pearson International Airport. Pilots flying near Calgary's airport reported being lased six times in the past 24 months. Four incidents occurred in British Columbia. Planes preparing to land are the greatest concern. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, suspecting terrorists may try to use lasers to down planes, recently sent out a warning to pilots to immediately look away from any unexpected sources of light. The FBI is believed to be probing at least three recent lasing incidents in the U.S. but none were thought to be related to terrorism. Most consumer laser pointers are not powerful enough to cause problems but those with military, medical or research applications could reach high enough altitudes to affect pilots. More powerful lasers require heavy machinery and a permit from Health Canada.

Source: <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=363019>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

18. *March 9, KOLO 8 Reno* – (Nevada) **Powder determined to be baking soda.** A suspicious white powder found at a Sparks, Nevada, post office has been determined to be baking soda, according to the Sparks Fire Department. HAZMAT, health officials,

and Sparks firefighters converged on the U.S. Post Office. The Sparks Fire Department says a call came in about a white powder found near a parcel box around 5:30 p.m. Saturday. The division chief says the pattern of the powder led him to believe it could have come from a box or package that was dropped on the floor.

Source: <http://www.kolotv.com/home/headlines/16423776.html>

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Agriculture and Food Sector

19. *March 8, Daily Bulletin* – (National) **Risky? Unlikely.** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and an associate professor and director of the Center for Antimicrobial Research and Food Safety at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, the chance of Americans getting sick from the meat recalled from the Westland/Hallmark Meat Packing plant in Chino, California, is extremely remote. “Of all the cows that have been tested for mad cow disease in the United States, as far as I know, there was only one cow imported from Canada and one cow in the United States,” the professor said. “There have been surveys to test for mad cow disease in this country, and out of those surveys, I think it was almost a quarter of a million cattle that were tested by the USDA. None of them have tested positive. The prevalence of mad cow disease in the United States is very, very low,” he added.

Source: http://www.dailybulletin.com/ci_8507804?source=most_viewed

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Water Sector

20. *March 10, Associated Press* – (National) **Study finds over the counter drugs in drinking water in 24 major U.S. regions.** A vast array of pharmaceuticals – including antibiotics, anti-convulsants, mood stabilizers, and sex hormones – have been found in the drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans, an Associated Press investigation shows. The concentrations of these pharmaceuticals are tiny, measured in quantities of parts per billion or trillion, far below the levels of a medical dose. Also, utilities insist their water is safe. Water providers rarely disclose results of pharmaceutical screenings, unless pressed, the AP found. For example, the head of a group representing major California suppliers said the public “doesn’t know how to interpret the information” and might be unduly alarmed. While researchers do not yet understand the exact risks from decades of persistent exposure to random combinations of low levels of pharmaceuticals, recent studies – which have gone virtually unnoticed by the general public – have found alarming effects on human cells and wildlife. The federal government does not require any testing and has not set safety limits for drugs in water. Of the 62 major water providers contacted, the drinking water for only 28 was tested. Some providers screen only for one or two pharmaceuticals, leaving open the possibility that others are present. The AP’s investigation also indicates that watersheds, the natural sources of most of the nation’s water supply, also are contaminated. Tests were conducted in the watersheds of 35 of the 62 major providers surveyed by the AP, and pharmaceuticals were detected in 28. Some drugs, including widely used cholesterol

fighters, tranquilizers, and anti-epileptic medications, resist modern drinking water and wastewater treatment processes. Plus, the Environmental Protection Agency says there are no sewage treatment systems specifically engineered to remove pharmaceuticals. One technology, reverse osmosis, removes virtually all pharmaceutical contaminants, but is very expensive for large-scale use and leaves several gallons of polluted water for every one that is made drinkable. In addition, there is evidence that adding chlorine, a common process in conventional drinking water treatment plants, makes some pharmaceuticals more toxic.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,336286,00.html>

21. *March 9, Associated Press* – (Alabama; Florida; Georgia) **Tri-state water war to heat up with federal intervention.** Lawyers for Georgia, Florida, and Alabama are gearing up again for battle, now that tri-state water negotiations have collapsed and the federal government says it will decide how to dole out water rights in the region. At least eight lawsuits are pending involving the two-decade water feud, and state officials said they expect heavy activity in those cases this year. At the same time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will soon issue a short-term water operations plan – a move that could set off a fresh wave of legal maneuvering. The Corps’ short-term plan to govern river operations during severe drought would replace an existing arrangement – set to expire June 1 – that the secretary of the Interior announced at the start of the governors’ talks in November, allowing Georgia to hold back more water in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river basin that runs along the Alabama-Georgia border. The Corps also has begun rewriting control manuals that guide long-term water allocations in the river systems. Because revising the manuals could take several years, action in the courts could supersede the Corps’ decisions. The fundamental issue in the cases is whether the Corps is already misappropriating water.

Source:

http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/stories/2008/03/08/apdrought_0309.html

22. *March 9, Associated Press* – (International) **Contaminated water may have affected U.S. troops.** An internal Pentagon report obtained by the Associated Press concludes dozens of U.S. troops in Iraq have become sick at bases using “unmonitored and potentially unsafe” water. The Pentagon’s inspector general found water quality problems between 2004 and 2006 at two locations run by the U.S. military and three sites run by contractor KBR. The problems affected water used for washing, bathing, shaving, and cleaning, but not for drinking. The report says the water was smelly and discolored and left soldiers with a number of skin ailments and intestinal problems. In a statement, KBR says its water treatment has met or exceeded all applicable military and contract standards.

Source: <http://www.thestar.com/News/World/article/326686>

23. *March 8, Star-News* – (North Carolina) **Tritium leaked at plant again.** For the second time in less than a year, Progress Energy has detected levels of a radioactive isotope in groundwater on the Brunswick nuclear plant site in North Carolina. The company announced Friday that an underground storm drain pipe near the plant leaked water containing tritium. Although the levels of tritium found in the shallow monitoring wells

are above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standard for what is acceptable in drinking water, the tritium has not seeped deep enough to enter drinking-water wells, a Progress Energy spokesperson said.

Source:

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20080308/NEWS/803080384/1004/NEWS01>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

24. *March 10, Reuters* – (International) **India culls poultry to contain new bird flu outbreak.** A month after authorities declared bird flu was under control in eastern India, veterinary workers began culling thousands of chickens on Monday to contain a fresh outbreak being reported from West Bengal's Murshidabad district where 900 chickens and ducks died over the last two weeks, officials said. In January, the H5N1 virus had hit 13 of the state's 19 districts, including Murshidabad, bringing down poultry sales by more than 70 percent in the state, but it had a limited impact in rest of the country. Authorities in West Bengal then culled more than 3.4 million birds in the state after the World Health Organization (WHO) described January's outbreak as the worst-ever in India. Officials in eastern India say bird flu among poultry could spread to new areas. The state's animal resources minister said smuggled poultry from bird-flu hit Bangladesh could have triggered the latest outbreak. There have been no reported human cases of the bird flu in India yet.

Source: <http://in.reuters.com/article/health/idINSP14635220080310?sp=true>

25. *March 10, Xinhua* – (International) **Bird flu hits one more Vietnamese province.** Bird flu has recently stricken poultry in central Vietnamese Quang Tri province, raising the total number of affected localities nationwide to nine, local newspaper Pioneer reported Monday. The disease outbreak started on March 4 in Gio Linh district, killing 90 out of 600 unvaccinated ducks raised by a household. The whole flock of poultry has been culled to prevent further spread.

Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-03/10/content_7757481.htm

26. *March 10, Nurse.com* – (Illinois) **Flu strain prompts health alert.** Ten Chicago-area patients have tested positive for an unusual type of drug-resistant influenza, the Chicago Tribune reported. The strain does not respond to Tamiflu, prompting concern and increased surveillance by local and federal health officials. The Illinois Department of Public Health issued a health alert February 21 recommending flu patients in intensive care units receive a combination of drugs until their virus can be analyzed. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says nationwide 4.6 percent of flu samples tested have shown signs of drug resistance this season, compared to one percent in previous seasons.

Source: <http://include.nurse.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080310/IL02/102250021>

27. *March 9, Newsday* – (National) **Schumer plan would inspect foreign drugs.** Spurred by a massive recall of the drug heparin, a New York senator said yesterday the federal government should require foreign manufacturers to allow American inspectors to

monitor drug factories. He and a colleague will soon introduce legislation to increase Food and Drug Administration funding and require overseas monitoring. The announcement comes in the wake of the FDA linking 19 deaths and hundreds of injuries in people taking the blood thinner to tainted heparin ingredients imported from China. Foreign drug factories are examined about once every 13 years, as opposed to once every two years for American drug manufacturers, and 80 percent of the drugs imported into America are made in china, the senator said.

Source: <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/longisland/ny-lischiu0310,0,3549471.story>

Government Facilities Sector

28. *March 9, KLAS 8 Las Vegas* – (Nevada) **Metro investigating bomb scare at City Hall.**

Las Vegas Metro Police are investigating a bomb scare this weekend at Las Vegas City Hall. It happened around midnight on Saturday when police said a man found a metal briefcase outside City Hall and brought it inside. Investigators found several glass vials inside and called in the bomb squad and Hazmat teams, who determined the items were harmless. Police are investigating where the case came from.

Source: http://www.lasvegasnow.com/Global/story.asp?S=7989305&nav=menu102_2

29. *March 8, Newsday* – (New York) **Suspicious letter prompts shutdown at Babylon school.** Babylon Junior-Senior High School in New York was temporarily shut down and much of the student body went home after a suspicious letter was found Friday morning in a teacher's mailbox, the district superintendent said. The letter had an ominous tone, included the word "boom" and indicated that Friday was the day something would occur. The letter did not mention a bomb or any other specific threat, nor did it say that anyone was a target of potential violence. About a dozen Suffolk police cruisers responded, along with fire trucks for backup assistance. The school was evacuated to buildings next door for an hour. A police sweep of the high school found nothing.

Source: <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/suffolk/ny-lievac085606412mar08,0,1438431.story>

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Emergency Services Sector

30. *March 10, PRNewswire-FirstCall* – (California) **Press Release: NextPhase wireless completes installation of secure wireless broadband network for Irvine Police Department.** "NextPhase Wireless, Inc., a nationwide developer of WiMAX-ready networks and provider of advanced wireless broadband solutions, today announced that it has completed the installation of the wireless broadband network contracted in mid-2007 by the Irvine Police Department (IPD) in Irvine, California. Operating on the new wireless 4.9 GHz spectrum designated by the FCC for public safety, emergency management and homeland security applications, IPD's new wireless broadband network will be primarily used to transmit voice, video and data from mobile and fixed

radio communications systems, IP surveillance cameras and the Internet both to and from the Department's new state-of-the-art Mobile Command and Communications Vehicle. NextPhase will continue to support the network and manage wireless connectivity services for the agency."

Source: <http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/2008/03/10/3317125.htm>

31. *March 8, Government Executive* – (National) **FEMA to take over mass care role formerly held by Red Cross.** Emergency management professionals learned many lessons from the chaotic response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, among them the need for a more coherent approach to providing mass care. The storm destroyed or rendered uninhabitable more than 300,000 homes, sending nearly a million people in search of shelter. As a result of that unprecedented experience, the American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency agreed last year that FEMA should have responsibility for coordinating mass care, and not the Red Cross, as had been the case. That is because FEMA could direct federal resources to meet mass care needs, while the private Red Cross could not – a factor that added to the confusion in the aftermath of Katrina. That agreement was codified earlier this year in the National Response Framework, the emergency response blueprint FEMA published in January with input from other federal agencies and state, local and private entities involved in disaster management. A recent report by the Government Accountability Office raises concerns about the new arrangement, however. While GAO supports FEMA's role as the primary agency for providing mass care, it questions whether it has the staff and resources to do so adequately. Additionally, neither FEMA nor the Red Cross nor other volunteer organizations are sufficiently prepared to support the elderly or people with disabilities during a disaster, auditors found. While the role of the Red Cross will remain largely the same as in the past, it no longer will be responsible for reporting data on all shelters, something it had been required to do. Now, the Red Cross will report only on its own shelters and states will be responsible for reporting on all other shelters. FEMA will be responsible for compiling the data on all shelters into a centralized database, still under development.

Source: <http://govexec.com/dailyfed/0308/030708kp1.htm>

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Information Technology

32. *March 10, IDG News Service* – (National) **Rise in Gmail spam indicates more solved CAPTCHAs.** Spam originating from Google's Gmail domain doubled last month, indicating that spammers are still defeating the CAPTCHA, the distorted text used as a security test to thwart mass registration of e-mail accounts and other Web site abuse. Gmail spam went from 1.3 percent of all spam e-mail to 2.6 percent in February, according to data released by e-mail security vendor MessageLabs on Monday. The new statistics are another nail in the coffin for CAPTCHA, which stands for Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart. Google is the latest free Web mail provider to be victimized by spammers' efforts to create software to solve the codes, or at times, also employ people to solve the codes en masse. "It's only a matter of time before [CAPTCHAs] are comprehensively defeated," said a senior

analyst at MessageLabs. Last month, security vendor Websense ascertained that spammers were using two hosts to crack Gmail's CAPTCHAs. The method appeared to be successful only 20 percent of the time. But if the procedure is repeated thousands of times, many new accounts can be generated and used to send spam. Most of the messages use links and images to advertise adult entertainment sites, he said. While other spammy domains can simply be blocked by antispam software, businesses are reluctant to cut off the domains of free Web mail providers because of their legitimate use, he said. Spam from Web mail providers comprises 4.2 percent of all spam. Google's CAPTCHA system is considered hard to crack, but so was Yahoo's, which is also regularly beaten. MessageLabs said 88.7 percent of the spam from free Web mail providers comes from Yahoo's domains. Microsoft's CAPTCHA, used for registering accounts on its Windows Live Mail service, has also been cracked. Websense believes the same group of spammers is responsible for breaking both Google and Microsoft's system.

Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/031008-rise-in-gmail-spam-indicates.html>

33. *March 10, IDG News Service* – (National) **Security must evolve, CERT official says.** Security has to evolve into something that supports business, rather than the other way around, according to a senior member of the technical staff at Carnegie Mellon University's Computer Emergency Response Team. The tendency is to want to start locking things down, so security is something that disables, not enables, business, and remains an area where boxes and technology rule, she said in Stockholm at the European Computer Audit, Control and Security Conference. "Solving your security problems by buying another box is just wishful thinking. People just haven't thought of security as a discipline that can be measured, managed and mapped. It's a new way of looking at it," she said. Security requirements have to spring from business-process needs, she stressed, saying, "Requirements should be driven by owners of business processes, not the caretakers of technology." To simplify efforts to make changes to security strategy, her development team at CERT has developed the Resiliency Engineering Framework (REF), which was launched last year. It does not compete with other frameworks, such as ITIL. REF identifies enterprise-wide processes for managing operational resiliency – including everything from training to compliance management – and provides a structure from which an organization can start to improve. "You can reduce cost, eliminate duplicate efforts and improve compliance efforts, for example," she said.
Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/031008-security-must-evolve-cert-official.html>
34. *March 9, Network World* – (International) **IT security lacking in best practices.** The need for best practices knowledge was identified by 16 percent of respondents as the top IT security challenge affecting organizations today, according to a recent survey of 322 IT security professionals, undertaken by the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (CATA) in partnership with Microsoft. Coming in a close second was data protection, cited by 15 percent of respondents, followed by access management, cited by 13 percent. "The lack of best practices being one of the primary challenges was certainly one we weren't anticipating when we started this study," said CATA's vice-president of

research. Another finding indicated that IT security professionals believe that their organizations do not put enough emphasis on IT security challenges and often react after the problem arrives on their doorstep. “I see a lot of basic processes like simple hardening of servers that still isn’t being done as the norm, so while some organizations get it, many others don’t,” said an executive officer at the Federation of Security Professionals in Toronto. “Larger organizations tend to understand security better and it also depends on the industry.” To address these issues, CATA recommended that the industry develop industry-wide best practices, establish a research series of IT security professional perspectives reports, undertake a study to determine the value of an IT security skills set, and work to define Canada’s global IT security brand.

Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/030708-it-security-lacking-in-best.html?fsrc=rss-security>

35. *March 8, Network World* – (International) **Top cybercrook targets for 2008.** A recent Internet Security Outlook Report issued by CA warns that social networks and Web 2.0 are among the top potential targets for online attacks in 2008. The study, based on data compiled by CA’s Global Security Advisor researchers, features Internet security predictions for 2008 and also reports on trends from 2007. “Cybercriminals go where opportunity lies and take advantage of any and all vulnerabilities,” said the vice president of Product Management for CA’s Internet Security Business Unit. “While security protection is becoming better at detecting malware, online thieves are getting smarter and stealthier in the way they attack our computers.” CA made a number of online security predictions for 2008, including: the number of computers infected by botnets will increase sharply in 2008, with bot herders changing their tactics and decentralizing via peer-to-peer architectures; new levels of sophistication in malware, which will target virtualized computers and increasingly use obfuscation techniques to hide in plain sight; Social networking sites will become increasingly popular and, as a result, more vulnerable; Web 2.0 services and sites will come under targeted attack; and Windows Vista will more users will bring more attacks.

Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/030708-top-cybercrook-targets-for.html?fsrc=rss-security>

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

36. *March 10, IDG News Service* – (International) **Ericsson predicts demise for Wi-Fi hot spots.** As mobile broadband takes off, Wi-Fi hot spots will become as irrelevant as telephone booths, LM Ericsson Telephone Co.’s chief marketing officer said Monday. Mobile broadband is growing faster than mobile or fixed telephony ever did, he said. “In

Austria, they are saying that mobile broadband will pass fixed broadband this year. It's already growing faster, and in Sweden, the most popular phone is a USB modem," said the Ericsson representative, who was the keynote speaker at the European Computer Audit, Control and Security Conference in Stockholm. As more people start using mobile broadband, hot spots will no longer be needed. A couple of factors will accelerate the move to mobile broadband. In countries such as Austria, Denmark and Sweden, the average price for a mobile broadband subscription is only \$31 U.S. per month, he said. Also, support for high-speed packet access (HSPA), favored by Ericsson, is being built into more and more laptops. Ericsson recently signed a deal to put HSPA technology in some Lenovo Group Ltd. notebooks. But challenges still remain. Coverage, availability and price – especially when someone is roaming on other networks – are all key factors for success. Operators are also looking at ways to provide better signal coverage, particularly indoors and in rural areas.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9067479&source=rss_news10

37. *March 8, BroadbandReports.com* – (New York) **NYC launches ambitious wireless network.** New York City is about to launch a citywide wireless network intended to cover all of the city's 322 square miles by the end of the year. This is not a public Wi-Fi program but instead is designed as a municipal network providing over fifty different applications including public safety, government asset tracking and mobile worker support within certain agencies. MuniWireless is calling it the "most comprehensive and far-reaching wireless project in the nation, in terms of applications breadth." The initial launch is next month and will cover about seventy percent of the network. That should be followed by another twenty five percent completed by the end of the summer. The final five percent should find the network accessible by year's end. As for public access, the network's leaders say that they may eventually consider doing something with the network to bridge the digital divide by providing public Wi-Fi access to certain populations. However, they note that there are other projects in the works designed to meet these needs.

Source: <http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/NYC-Launches-Ambitious-Wireless-Network-92458>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

38. *March 10, Press Association* – (International) **Turkish police foil terror plot.** A Turkish news agency says police have foiled an alleged plot to bomb US companies in the country. Police arrested three suspects belonging to a leftist militant group during a raid in Istanbul, the Dogan agency reported. Authorities seized a remote-controlled toy car allegedly being prepared to be used in a bombing. Police also seized a list of US companies that the DHKP-C group was targeting, including Coca Cola, Pepsi and Citibank, Dogan reported. The DHKP-C is listed as a terror group by the US and EU, and has been active since the 1970s.

Source: <http://ukpress.google.com/article/ALeqM5htiUrizAVUvj5zhcG6PKxoLmC-Cg>

39. *March 9, Associated Press* – (International) **Terror plots targeting Beijing Olympics, jetliner foiled in China.** Chinese police broke up a terror plot targeting the Beijing Olympics, and a flight crew foiled an apparent attempt to crash a Chinese jetliner in a separate case, officials said Sunday. A top Communist Party official in the far western region of Xinjiang said materials seized in a January 27 raid in the regional capital, Urumqi, suggested the plotters planned “specifically to sabotage the staging of the Beijing Olympics,” although authorities have not identified their specific targets. He added that the group had been trained by and was following the orders of a Uighur separatist group based in Pakistan and Afghanistan called the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, or ETIM. The group has been labeled a terrorist organization by the United Nations and the United States. The Global Times newspaper published by the Communist Party had earlier said the group planned bombings and other “violent terrorist incidents” for February 5, the last business day before the start of the Lunar New Year holiday. While deadly violence is less common in China than in many countries -- Beijing bans virtually all private gun ownership -- officials were quick to assert that a deadly hostage drama involving 10 Australian travel agents last week was not an embarrassment in the run-up to the Olympics. The hostage-taker was shot and killed by a police sniper after an almost three-hour standoff in the northern tourist hub, Xi’an. The hostage-taker’s motive was not known. China has ratcheted up anti-terror preparations ahead of the Games, with the nation’s top police official last year labeling terrorism the biggest threat facing the event.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,336250,00.html>

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

Nothing to Report

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Dams Sector

40. *March 10, Dallas Morning News* – (Texas) **Earthen dam repair urged across north Texas.** The federal government has built almost 2,000 of the dams in Texas (about 11,000 nationwide) in the past 50-plus years to help control flooding and reduce soil erosion. In protecting watersheds, roads, and bridges, the dams create privately owned lakes that provide water, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic amenities for those living nearby. Built mostly in rural areas, the dams were turned over to local sponsors, typically county governments and conservation districts, which secured easements to operate and maintain the structures. Development upstream has increased runoff into the dams’ lakes. And as they age and development intensifies downstream, the potential for failure and loss of life and property will increase if the structures are not kept up and, if necessary, upgraded, state and federal officials warn. “There’s nothing out there that has an imminent threat of failure,” said the dam safety coordinator for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. But almost 14 percent of the 1,973 floodwater

dams in Texas are 50 years or older, and 109 need basic repairs at an estimated cost of \$28 million, according to the conservation service.

Source:

http://www.wfaa.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/tv/stories/DN-dams_10met.ART.State.Edition2.461460f.html

41. *March 9, Times-Picayune* – (Louisiana) **Corps of Engineers addressing repairs made during rapid-response phase.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is fixing a number of the emergency repairs made by a rapid-response task force deployed military-style after Katrina to quickly fix storm damage before the next hurricane season. Most of the repairs, which involve only a minute percentage of all task force projects, address cracking and separation of concrete scour and erosion protection in multiple locations, but mostly in eastern New Orleans. Other fixes address grass-growing problems that have left some earthen levees partially bare and pitted with ruts and rills, especially in St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes. Corps officials also disclosed that some follow-up work may be needed along the 17th Street Canal, where Corps personnel must determine the source of what is called “a small wet area” on the protected side of the east floodwall at the repaired breach site. The water does not seem to be coming from the breach repair itself, said the Corps’ senior project manager for levees and floodwalls in Orleans Parish. As part of that original repair work, which was completed last summer at a total cost of about \$25 million, he said extra clay was added to the site.

Source:

http://www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2008/03/corps_of_engineers_addressing.html

42. *March 8, Post-Star* – (New York) **Police seeking dam burglars.** New York State Police said Friday they are searching for at least one person who attempted to break into a building at the Conklingville Dam. The attempted break-in occurred sometime between 4 p.m. Monday and 8 a.m. Tuesday, according to officials at the Hudson River-Black River Regulating District, the agency that oversees the dam. At least one person attempted to enter the facility through locked hatches after cutting a hole in a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire, officials said. “They did gain somewhat of an access to the grounds, but not the (dam) facility itself,” said the State Police Investigator. “There was no damage to any of the operating portions of the dam.” He added that, “There’s no indication of any attempt at terrorism or anything of that nature.” Even if the break-in attempt was an act of sabotage, it is unlikely a flood would have occurred, said the Hudson River-Black River District executive director. “Even if they had been able to get past the secure hatches, there are other layers of security inside and all of the operating devices are locked down,” he said. “Had the person been able to open up the valves in the dam, which is highly unlikely because they wouldn’t know how to operate the equipment to do that...with the current Hudson River flows, this extra water would not have created flooding.”

Source: <http://www.poststar.com/articles/2008/03/08/news/local/13413382.txt>

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